

JOINT MEETING
Lincoln Board of Education
Lincoln City Council
Mayor Coleen Seng
Lancaster County Board

Monday, June 6, 2005
7:30 a.m.

County-City Building
555 S. 10th Street
Chambers & Room 113

AGENDA

1. **Approval of Minutes from November 1, 2004** (attached)
2. **7:30a Presentation on the History and Success of the Lincoln-Lancaster Railroad Transportation Safety District** - Roger Figard, City Engineer
3. **8:00a Infrastructure Cooperation for Proposed School Sites** - Kathy Danek, LPS Board (info/map attached)
4. **8:15a Summer City/County Job Opportunities for LPS Students** - Kathy Danek, LPS Board
5. **Old Business**
6. **New Business**
7. **Future Meeting Date/Location** - Tuesday, September 6, 2005; Hosted by LPS
8. **Adjournment**

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING OF THE
LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION
LINCOLN CITY COUNCIL/MAYOR
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD
Monday, June 6, 2005 - 7:30 a.m.
County-City Building - Room 113

Board of Education Members Present: Barbara Baier, Kathy Danek, Lillie Larsen and Ed Zimmer **Absent:** Doug Evans, Don Mayhew and Keith Prettyman

City Council Members Present: Jon Camp, Robin Eschliman, Dan Marvin, Annette McRoy, Patte Newman and Ken Svoboda **Absent:** Jonathan Cook

County Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Larry Hudkins, Deb Schorr and Bob Workman **Absent:** Ray Stevens

Others Present: Mayor Coleen Seng; Susan Gourley, Dennis Van Horn, Dave Myers, Scott Weiskamp, Marilyn Moore, Nancy Biggs, Donna Ewoldt and Mary Reiman, Lincoln Public Schools; Kerry Eagan and Gwen Thorpe, County Board Office; Rick Hoppe, Mayor's Office; Roger Figard, Karl Fredrickson, Scott Opfer, Randy Hoskins and Steve Masters, Public Works & Utilities; Marvin Krout, Planning Department; Lynn Johnson, Parks & Recreation; Carol Connor, Pat Leach, Shirley Maly and Myrna Tewes, Lincoln Public Libraries; Trish Owen, Deputy County Clerk; Coby Mach, LIBA; and Cori Beattie, County Board Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Workman moved approval of the minutes from the November 1, 2004 meeting; seconded by Heier. Motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION ON THE HISTORY AND SUCCESS OF THE LINCOLN-LANCASTER RAILROAD TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DISTRICT

Roger Figard, City Engineer, gave a power point presentation on the history of the Lincoln-Lancaster Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD). In 1971, the Nebraska Legislature authorized the formation of RTSD's for a 25-year period, whereby, any county or primary class city with a population of 5,000 could create one. RTSDs are formed by city council and county board resolution and the Board makeup consists of three members each. Figard noted more than one city can participate with three members from each body serving on the Board. Additionally, if there are two cities and one county, each county commissioner would get two votes, making the rural vote equal to the urban vote.

In 1990, the Lincoln City Engineer was named Executive Director of the RTSD. In 1995, the Legislature extended the RTSD authority indefinitely. The Lincoln-Lancaster County RTSD is currently the only one exercising this authority within the State.

Figard said an RTSD can acquire right-of-way or land, use eminent domain, receive title of property and enter into contracts and agreements. He added an RTSD must comply with regulations of other government agencies and must examine costs and benefits of every project. It may also levy property tax to a maximum of \$0.26 per \$100 (the current levy).

With regard to why Lincoln and Lancaster County have an RTSD, Figard said it has been his experience that things happen when a need is realized. He referenced newspaper articles which showed 55 deaths, 57 injuries and 115 property accidents occurring between car/pedestrian and trains in the immediate Lincoln area between 1952 and 1968. The problem was immediately addressed by adding protection at 90 main crossings in the City. Additionally, all crossings were prioritized for safety and a long-term corridor study and consolidation plan was proposed for the entire Lincoln-Lancaster County area.

Figard noted numerous railroads entered Lincoln through various corridors in 1975. The RTSD, along with help from the federal government, identified six corridors for improvement. He summarized the corridors as follows:

Corridor "A" (Northwest Lincoln)

- Remove Burlington Northern Railroad (BNRR) Bridge over Oak Creek
- Consolidate BNRR and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)

Corridor "B" (West Lincoln)

- Construct new trackage in BNRR yard
- Close railroad crossings at West "O" and West "P" Streets

Figard said these projects were approved as Federal Aid Highway Act Demonstration Projects and Corridor "A" work was completed by the railroads at a cost of \$483,000. In 1979, Corridor "B" work was done and crossings were removed at West "O" and West "P." He noted other opportunities were added to these corridors, such as, the U.S. Highway 77 viaduct and the Coddington Avenue bridge replacement on the West Bypass.

Corridor "C" (South Lincoln)

- Consolidate BNRR, UPRR and Rock Island Railroad (RIRR) on double track on 3rd St.
- Remove RIRR from center of Lincoln
- Construct viaducts on Van Dorn Street and West "A" Street

Corridor "D"

- Consolidate BNRR, Chicago Northwestern Railroad and RIRR near N. 27th Street
- Construct viaduct on N. 27th Street

Figard said work in these corridors was also approved as part of the original demonstration project. In 1980, the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroads ceased operations, thus, major benefits were lost. But, he felt the community gained much as the corridors were still available for trails and other recreation and crossing conflicts were eliminated.

Figard stated Corridors "C" and "D" were modified in the 1980's to include only grade separations on the N. 27th Street viaduct, the "K" Street connection, the "L" Street connection and the Van Dorn Street viaduct. More recently, a pedestrian underpass was constructed at 3rd and "F" Streets to allow kids a safer passage to school and a viaduct was constructed at 3rd and "A" Streets. He noted the latter project was really an attribute to the community.

Corridor "E" (East Lincoln)

- Consolidate Missouri Pacific Railroad (MoPac) and Rock Island Railroad
- Abandon MoPac

Corridor "F" (South Lincoln)

- Relocate Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad (BNSF) line two miles south of Lincoln
- Abandon BNSF line parallel to Highway 2

Figard said in 1973 neither of the above projects had a positive cost-benefit ratio, thus, the RTSD was not able to move ahead with them. But, when the MoPac and Rock Island Railroads ceased operations, additional trail opportunities were presented.

In reviewing all of the corridors, Figard pointed out how most of the projects were completed. He reiterated the RTSD works on crossing safety and agreements were established years ago between the City and County to provide cooperation for new signals, signals with gates, upgrading signals and improving the crossing materials. He felt this is one of the greatest things the community has done. Another partnership was formed whereby the RTSD pays for materials and the railroads do the installation.

With regard to expenditures, Figard said just under \$1 million was spent on crossing improvements between 1973-84. Over \$2 million has been spent since 1990.

Other projects the RTSD has been involved in include the rebuild of the Havelock underpass, the replacement of the 10th Street viaduct and the construction of the Haymarket Park pedestrian bridge. Additional County improvements include a new viaduct over the BNRR tracks at Waverly, the rebuild of the West Van Dorn bridge near S.W. 56th Street and the construction of the Firth viaduct.

Figard summarized some benefits of the RTSD. The number of crossings has been reduced from 210 to 110. Safety improvements in the community are evidenced by significantly lower death, injury and property damage statistics. It was noted there has not been one train-car/pedestrian fatality in the last eight years. Figard hoped this trend continues.

Other RTSD benefits include the construction of 11 new grade separations (4 pedestrian), the rebuilding of 3 grade separations, the construction of nearly 10 miles of new railroad track, improvement to more than 150 crossings and the closure of more than 100 crossings (including abandonments and consolidations).

Figard noted from 1990 to 2004, the RTSD collected \$36,278,354 via the levy, \$40 million from the federal government and additional funding from the railroads and the State. Future projects consist of Antelope Valley - crossing BNSF corridor, S.W. 40th Street - south of "O" Street, and S. 68th Street - near Hickman.

Workman said he felt the RTSD is one of the City and County's best interlocal agreements. He pointed out the large decrease in train-related deaths and injuries and added, when citizens pay this tax, they should be very thankful lives are being saved. He mentioned the City and County are embarking on another interlocal agreement on rural to urban transition for streets (RUTS). Both are examples of how money can be set aside to benefit the entire community. Figard added he recently attended a railroad safety conference which pointed out a startling statistic. Nationally, there is now a higher accident rate with trains and pedestrians versus

trains and vehicles. Therefore, communities need to do what they can with regard to sidewalks and trails placement to provide children and students a safe passage to school and activities.

INFRASTRUCTURE COOPERATION FOR PROPOSED SCHOOL SITES

Weiskamp said representatives from LPS, Planning, Parks & Recreation, Lincoln City Libraries and other agencies meet on a monthly basis to discuss future projects. He said a few years ago the City and County adopted a new Comprehensive Plan which was an impetus for LPS to do their own plan. In 2004, the LPS Executive Summary became a component of the City-County Comprehensive Plan, all the while, maintaining discussions on cooperation in terms of City and school projects. With regard specifically to infrastructure, Weiskamp said discussion occurs 2-3 years prior to a school site being purchased. He assured officials there is a lot going on behind the scenes and the Boards should be proud of the cooperative efforts of their staffs.

Danek asked Weiskamp to talk about how LPS and Parks & Recreation are partnering to make better use of existing facilities. Weiskamp noted he is not as familiar with the Community Learning Center (CLC) concept as Lynn Johnson of Parks & Recreation or Barb Dean of the YMCA. But, he added these programs have been inserted into 14-15 schools and they continue to be incorporated as facilities are renovated or constructed. Major recreation centers co-located with LPS include Belmont, Calvert and Irving. Another at Park will be opening soon.

Marvin inquired about the plan for an Arnold Heights school. Weiskamp said sites continue to be reviewed. The main objective is for the project to be in Tier I of the Comprehensive Plan but a specific site has not been located as of this date, although, staff has discussed potential locations. Marvin thought it would be helpful to have this information prior to any vote.

In response to Hudkins' inquiry regarding how future sites are determined, Weiskamp said several things are considered. While infrastructure is one aspect, he stated it is important to position a school in the area so as development begins, they can work efficiently with builders, parks, etc. He added that 90% of the time, the actual school site does not end up exactly where the star is on the map previously provided to officials (**See Exhibit A**). Since schools bring families, they are considered a hub by developers.

Hudkins asked whether Wes Furrer has contacted anyone regarding Little Rebels baseball and a possible land donation. Weiskamp said Little Rebels has not contacted LPS, but, he did speak with Mr. Furrer and visited his property within the area of the school site under consideration.

Svoboda inquired about geographic flexibility with regard to donated land for schools. Weiskamp said LPS is always willing to accept free land and to work to make it a feasible future school site, i.e., not boxed in. Various circumstances are evaluated and, if necessary, land can sometimes be traded within a development to acquire the best possible site.

Camp asked if there has been any consideration at the middle school level to revert back to locating them closer to arterials. He indicated he receives many complaints from constituents about Lux Middle School (located at 78th and High Streets). Weiskamp said every site is thoroughly evaluated with close attention given to specific positioning within a neighborhood. Additionally, a great deal of time is spent on traffic flow and patterns. He noted Scott Middle School and Southwest High School (both located along Pine Lake Road) also have their share of traffic issues. The District's preference is to not have schools located on arterials but, at the same time, be sensitive to a neighborhood.

Danek noted it is hard to predict where growth will go, as is the case with Goodrich Middle School on Superior Street. It was built on a neighborhood street which is now a major arterial. The Goodrich neighborhood complains heavily that they cannot use Superior Street because the school is there, thus, locating schools on arterials creates just as many problems as locating them in neighborhoods. She believed the goal is to find a middle ground.

Larsen asked Weiskamp to identify the number of acres needed per school site. Weiskamp noted high schools generally require 70 acres; middle schools 30-35 acres and elementary schools 20-25 acres. He added factors such as personal habits and traffic patterns also play into the size of schools but it is hard to predict what these will be in 20 years.

Larsen said a few years ago, a plea was made at a joint meeting for traffic lights to be installed at Folkways Boulevard and at 14th & Pine Lake Road (locations near new schools). It was understood that signals typically go in after the need is identified but she felt having them installed early is crucial. Hudkins concurred.

Weiskamp thanked all the individuals who take part in the monthly meetings, especially Steve Henrichsen of the City-County Planning Department who facilitates the group.

SUMMER CITY/COUNTY JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR LPS STUDENTS

Danek said this discussion is targeted at opportunities for students through the City, County and LPS such as library, parks and recreation and/or summer school programs.

Johnson noted the Parks & Recreation Department hires 600-800 seasonal employees during the summer, many of which are high school and college students. The Green Team program targets 13 to 15-year olds who work a three week session doing park maintenance, building playgrounds or working at day camps. It also provides job skills training. Funding allows for about 20 annual positions with the program being in existence for over 10 years. Johnson noted Green Team is being financially supported by the "Lincoln Cares" program this year.

In addition to the above, the following other positions are hired each year (minimum age requirements in parentheses): 200 life guards (16); 100 concession stand workers and cashiers (14); and 100 park/golf course maintenance workers (16 or 18). Other positions include day camp staff and athletic umpires (18). He added many students are also interested in citizenship issues. These application forms are available at the Parks & Recreation office.

Johnson noted seasonal hiring information is published in January with the majority of positions being filled by April 1st. He encouraged people to apply early. A list of summer activities for children is also available on the website. Additionally, two different brochures were published outlining the various activities and day camp opportunities. Johnson mentioned a particularly successful Spanish program at Wilderness Park.

Johnson noted mid camps are located at the four recreation centers (Belmont, Calvert, Irving and Park). Mid camps are a new program which provides kids a variety of opportunities including volunteer work. He added there are also Splash Nights at swimming pools and Friday night teen activities at some of the centers.

Workman inquired whether the City's living wage ordinance affects hiring. Johnson said it does not apply to seasonal employment, plus, the salary range for most positions is \$6.50 or more. Only the Green Team pays minimum wage.

Hudkins stated summer programs are also administered by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. Anyone interested can contact the Health Department.

Connor introduced Pat Leach, the head of youth services for the Lincoln City Libraries. She said the libraries do not have a significant hiring program for the summer, although, two temporary employees (one in the City and one in the County) are hired. They are typically adults who have to be licensed drivers and have experience in storytelling.

Leach noted the libraries do have a large number of middle school volunteers who primarily administer the summer reading program. This involves disseminating stickers and booklets in addition to providing a great deal of enthusiasm to the elementary school students in the program. Volunteer students also shelf books and perform other miscellaneous tasks.

Leach said a lot of summer programs are available. Middle school students can take part in book groups at branch libraries, as well as in Waverly. A number of special events are also held throughout the summer for young adults. Danek inquired about how these events are advertised. Leach said this is done in a variety of ways - through student contact at schools, flyers and the website. It was noted some school media centers will be open this summer. Leach said special bookmobile stops are also planned at other locations, including some in the County. Storytellers are also sent to various County locations throughout the summer.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Hudkins took the opportunity to welcome three new people to the group: Robin Eschliman, City Council Member; Dan Marvin, City Council Member; and Barb Baier, LPS Board Member.

FUTURE MEETING DATE/LOCATION

The next joint meeting will be hosted by LPS on Tuesday, September 13, 2005 at 7:30 a.m., at the LPS District Offices, 5901 "O" Street.

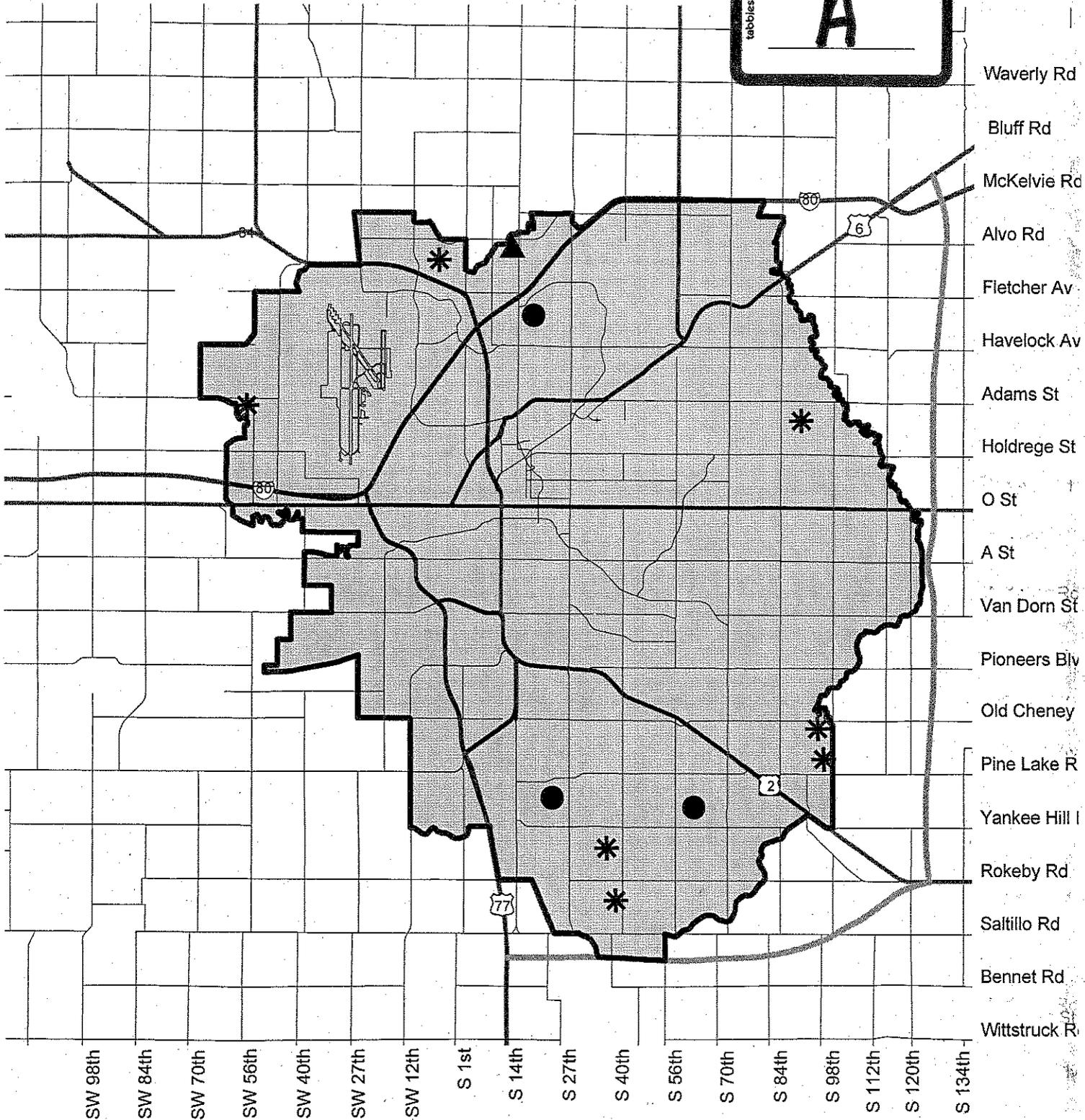
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Submitted by,



Cori R. Beattie
County Board Secretary

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EXHIBIT
A



- Future Elementary
- ▲ Future Middle
- * Future School
- Future Service Limit

